

2010 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION

Applicant (Agency & address - including zip)			Proposed Date of Completion:	August 1, 2012
Department of Planning & Building	Check one		Grant Amount Requested:	\$ 399,000
County of San Luis Obispo	City		If Joint Proposal, list participating entities/ contact person:	
976 Osos St., Rm. 300	County	X		
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408	MPO			
ATTN: James Lopes	COG			
	RTPA			
	JPA			
	Joint Proposal			
Lead Applicant's Name: James Lopes				
Title of Proposal (summarize the deliverable to be funded by this grant)				
San Luis Obispo County - Phase One Strategic Growth Implementation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning & Funding Sustainable Resources and Infrastructure based on a needs survey and new policies. 2. Promoting Infill & Removing Obstacles to Strategic Growth in design regulations and processes. 3. Documenting Environmental and Climate Effects for countywide Land Use and Circulation Element update and Pilot Community Plan Update in San Miguel 				
Applicant's Representative Authorized in Resolution			Person with Day to Day Responsibility for Plan	
Name: Chuck Stevenson			(if different from Authorized Representative)	
Title: Manager, Long Range Planning Division			Name: Mike Wulkan	
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<i>Check all of the following that are incorporated or applicable to the proposal:</i>				
Focus Area			Program Objectives	
X	Focus Area # 1			Applying for 20% EDC set aside
	Focus Area # 2			
	Focus Area # 3		X	Improve air and water quality
Eligibility Requirements (mandatory)			X	Promote public health
X	Consistent with State Planning Priorities		X	Promote equity
X	Reduces GHG emissions on a permanent basis		X	Increase affordable housing
X	Collaboration requirement		X	Increase infill and compact development
Priority Considerations			X	Revitalize urban and community centers
X	Demonstrates collaboration & community involvement		X	Protect natural resources and agricultural lands
X	Addresses climate change impacts		X	Reduce automobile usage and fuel consumption
X	Serves as best practices		X	Improve infrastructure systems
X	Leverages additional resources		X	Promote water conservation
X	Serves an economically disadvantaged community		X	Promote energy efficiency and conservation
	Serves a severely disadvantaged community		X	Strengthen the economy
I certify that the information contained in this plan application, including required attachments, is complete and accurate				
Signature:				
		Applicant's Authorized Representative as shown in Resolution		Date
Print Name and Title: Chuck Stevenson, Manager, Long Range Planning Division				

Proposal Summary Statement

San Luis Obispo County: Strategic Growth Implementing Amendments:

Amendments will be proposed to County plans and ordinances to implement “essential” and “high priority” strategies in the *attached* award-winning Strategic Growth policies and strategies (See Table G-1, page 29, for color coded strategies). This application includes projects authorized by the Board of Supervisors in November, 2009 for staff preparation; however, limited staffing has postponed the start of the amendments. Staff has begun a related Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE) update that is coordinated with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) Preliminary Sustainable Communities Strategy (PSCS). The requested grants will coordinate with these regional planning projects to create sustainable planning for resources and infrastructure, promote compatible infill and compact urban expansion, and enact a community plan for strategic growth within San Miguel, an economically disadvantaged community, as follows:

1. Planning & Funding Sustainable Resources and Infrastructure.

A **Complete Communities Survey** will identify water supply, infrastructure, transportation and public facilities needed to support sustainable, walkable communities consistent with County strategic growth policies by 2020, 2035 and 2050. The survey will inventory four of 10 County urban communities’ status in completing these needs, using proximity factors, such as to parks and schools, for walkability and transit services. It will focus more detail in PSCS infill Target Development Areas and urban expansion areas. A *cost/revenue analysis* will be performed to estimate the scope of necessary funding, and a *financial plan* will identify feasible methods of funding and subsidizing improvements. It will support a collaboration of County department leaders to create a long-term Capital Improvement Plan and public financing of infill development incentives.

2. Promoting Infill & Removing Obstacles to Strategic Growth

This project will create **Subdivision and Development Standards** for compatible, diverse and integrated infill and mixed-use design and incentives. A consultant will assist staff to revise and introduce regulations that promote urban infill instead of prevent it. The amendments will adjust parcel size ranges and building intensities to encourage diverse lot sizes and neighbor-sensitive infill development. Standards will guide compact lot sizes and patterns, varying housing types within subdivisions, and neighbor-friendly design to integrate projects with nearby development character. Standards will also add guidance for horizontal and vertical mixed use. The project will examine ordinance modifications, partial fee waivers, streamlined processing and other incentives to encourage mixed use projects. Design guidance will be added to the Countywide Design Guidelines for mixed-use site planning and building design. The project will create **Illustrative Digital Models** of before- and after- development within several Target Development Areas within the SLOCOG PSCS. These digital models will allow communities and developers to “fly through” potential development projects in local settings to show how the new standards integrate higher density development with its neighbors, create diverse housing and higher densities near transportation alternatives. A third component of this project is enhancement of an **Upgraded County Community Design Model** (CommunityViz software), to provide scenarios (and their outputs) of the Complete Communities Survey and the Subdivision and Development Standards project, using SLOCOG SCS traffic modeling.

3. Documenting Environmental and Greenhouse Gas Impacts: Land Use and Circulation Element update and Strategic Growth Pilot Community Plan Update in San Miguel

This project will leverage County funds for preparation of Environmental Impact Reports for two related implementing projects, which cannot be completed with current budget shortages. The Land Use and Circulation Element update will address rural natural resources, agriculture and rural development, to give priority to urban development. The San Miguel Community Plan is a pilot update to implement County Strategic Growth policies and the SLOCOG PSCS. The County will utilize emerging data and policies from the above projects. A planning class at Cal Poly State University – San Luis Obispo will prepare the draft plan with staff supervision and follow-up.

Proposal Description

Step 1: Threshold Requirements

1. Describe how the Proposal is consistent with the State's Planning Priorities, Section 65041.1 of the Government Code.

The **Complete Communities Survey** will identify specific infrastructure, facility and transportation needs, the projected funding, and public financing needed to create monetary incentives for infill within four priority communities, directly implementing the first goal of Section 65041.1. The study will inform and support policies to prioritize infrastructure improvements within efficient development areas, including SLOCOG PSCS Target Development Areas. The study will identify potential incentives that can be offered to compact development applications in the proposed **Subdivision and Development Standards**. It will also support the pilot strategic growth **Community Plan Update EIR** in San Miguel, which is a disadvantaged community that is underserved with infrastructure and pedestrian and other alternative transportation choices. The EIR will be enabled to evaluate project alternatives that derive from integrating the survey with a County GIS Community Design Model. Current data within the model will be expanded to reflect the survey and the development types generated by the Subdivision and Development Standards project. Similarly, the **Land Use and Circulation Element EIR** will be able to utilize the Survey to evaluate the impacts of growth and transportation under the existing plans and rural development trends, in comparison with a draft plan and plan alternatives. These interactive assessments will also utilize the data and traffic model of the SLOCOG Final SCS scenario building as well. The combination of these funding requests ensure that the goals of the State's Planning Priorities will be effectively met and create replicable models for further community and rural plan modifications.

2. Describe how the Proposal will (and include in work plan) reduce, on as permanent a basis that is feasible, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions consistent with California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 and the SLOCOG Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan.

To put things in perspective, the County has adopted strategic growth principles, policies and implementing strategies, with the overarching goal to create sustainably planned communities that avoid sustain resources and reduce global warming. A revised Conservation and Open Space Element was adopted in 2010 that emphasizes the same as well as energy and other natural resource conservation goals. With these recent policy directions, the next step is implementation. The proposed grant will enable a wide-range of adopted implementing strategies to be completed that result in permanent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. County essentially finds that it needs to obtain the data and create methods to reduce vehicle miles traveled, which the 2006 County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Baseline Inventory identified to be 67 percent of greenhouse gas emissions.

a. The **Complete Communities Survey** project will enable informed, fair assessments of future, long-term resource, infrastructure, facility and transportation needs that the current County rural and community plans generate (business as usual). The survey data will be integrated with the County Community Design Model and with the SLOCOG SCS iPlaces model. The survey will make recommendations for prioritizing specific improvements within the PSCS Target Development Areas, which can be evaluated in alternative scenarios for

the Final SCS preparation. Implicit in this modeling will be capabilities to review the infrastructure costs within scenarios that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The realism of this dimension of community development will enable more informed modeling and decisions about effective policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve energy. The integration of the survey with the project EIRs will enable them to identify relative merits of the proposed plans and plan alternatives.

b. New Subdivision and Development Standards will create compact development requirements and guidelines to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They will directly result in location- and transportation-efficient projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and water and energy usage. During preparation, the draft standards can be integrated within an **Upgraded County Community Design Model**, to demonstrate alternative GHG results from existing standards and higher density development. This model will be integrated with the County Climate Action Plan emissions model and the SLOCOG SCS iPlaces model. Consultant assistance to enhance the County Community Design Model will integrate these new data sources to create scenario capabilities related to GHG emissions and energy and water conservation.

c. The San Miguel Community Plan Update will be the first opportunity to propose specific land uses to implement County strategic growth policies, the SLOCOG Preliminary SCS and the pending County Climate Action Plan. The proposal to fund the environmental documentation will also be the first opportunity to apply the **Complete Communities Survey** data, the **Subdivision and Development Standards** proposals in a real-time application of an **Upgraded Community Design Model**. This model will also be effective for the **Land Use and Circulation Element** analysis of reducing rural development trends in favor of enhanced community development, and together these enhanced modeling capabilities will generate understandable comparisons between plan scenarios.

d. Thresholds from the California Air Resources Board will lead to local greenhouse gas indicators, to be utilized initially through the SLOCOG Sustainable Communities Strategy planning, and by the County Climate Action Plan GHG model. The grant will enable the County to integrate these indicators within an **Upgraded Community Design Model**. The regional modeling efforts will not be as precise or interactive with the pending County plan updates as this model. Generally, these indicators will be related to reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), estimated 67 percent of county GHG emissions. The grant proposals will be consistent with the regional plans described above, by integrating data from them and collaborating on scenario development within the SLOCOG SCS Target Development Areas.

3. Meet the Collaboration Requirements of the focus area applicable to the Proposal:

The **Complete Communities Survey** will fund a study to identify the costs and financing needed for providing sustainable water supply, facilities, infrastructure and transportation within County urban communities. It will involve departments, districts, agencies and SLOCOG to obtain data and review products. The study will integrate with the SLOCOG Final Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) to inform where regional funds might be most effectively spent to enable strategic growth and reduce vehicle miles traveled. The study will focus in detail within infill SLOCOG Target Development Areas and on potential compact urban expansion areas. The study will be designed in collaboration with SLOCOG staff to align with SCS data and methods to integrate well with its traffic model and SCS

scenario building. The survey and financing plan will inform the County CIP process and development process.

The **Subdivision and Development Standards** project will write design standards for subdivisions and development to promote and reduce barriers to compact, diverse and compatible development. The project will create illustrative digital models of before and after development within several Target Development Areas within the SLOCOG PSCS. These digital models are needed to allow communities and developers to visualize potential development projects in *local* settings to show how the new standards integrate higher density development with its neighbors, create diverse housing and higher densities near transportation alternatives. The project also will upgrade the County Community Design Model to utilize the design standards and development types to build realistic scenarios for use in meetings, workshops and online.

The **Environmental Documentation** project will supplement County funds for preparation of Environmental Impact Reports for two related implementing projects, which cannot be completed due to current budget shortages. The Land Use and Circulation Element update will address rural natural resources, agriculture and rural development, to give priority to urban development consistent with the SLOCOG PSCS. The San Miguel Community Plan will implement County Strategic Growth policies and the SLOCOG PSCS in a pilot implementing plan. The EIRs will utilize emerging data and policies from the above projects. The modeling projects will provide informative presentations in visual terms of plan proposals and alternatives. These EIRs need supplemental funding to identify significant impacts and project alternatives to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and decrease vehicle miles traveled. The EIRs will take advantage of the greenhouse gas emissions inventory and reduction measures being prepared in the County Climate Action Plan.

These three projects will integrate well with the SLOCOG goals for reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse emissions. They will directly support more complete modeling of the Final SCS scenarios and clarify their costs and impacts.

Step 2: Program Objectives

This section describes the extent to which the proposed projects meet the following objectives. A list of indicators and outcomes is provided in Table 1.

Improve Air and Water Quality

Air Quality

The primary strategy is to change regulations and incentives and provide enhanced pedestrian, transit and bike-friendly transportation infrastructure and operations, within and serving infill locations that are identified within the SLOCOG PSCS Target Development Areas, and in potential compact urban expansion areas (in the LUCE update). Using an Upgraded Community Design Model, the County will evaluate scenarios of continuing current zoning allowances and infrastructure practices, against scenarios that increase minimum and maximum densities, provide more complete infrastructure and facilities, and generate greater numbers of residential units. The differences in air quality between these scenarios will be measured using a SLOCOG traffic model and the Climate Action Plan air quality model. The indicators will be comparative decreases in (1) vehicle miles traveled, (2) ozone levels and (3) greenhouse gas emissions.

Water Quality

Water quality will be improved by measuring water usage between relative density scenarios in the Upgraded Community Design Model, to identify decreases in water consumption and enhanced water quality through use of Low Impact Design measures and NPDES guidelines. These guidelines were recently incorporated into the County Land Use Ordinance and staff can determine relative outcomes of development with and without these new standards. The indicators will be based on the Regional Water Management Plan criteria.

Promote Public Health

The projects focus on developing affordable, location-efficient housing near transportation choices and daily destinations. The Community Completeness Survey will be designed to measure the physical improvements to provide safe pedestrian, bicycle and transit transportation within a cost-efficient street system. The infrastructure financing plan will inform capital spending decisions by the County, service districts and agencies, to collaborate on raising funds for providing targeted strategic growth development areas with adequate facilities within more complete communities. The Subdivision and Development Standards project will identify site and building standards to avoid crime, noise and other pollution impacts within and adjacent to higher density residential development. The scenario development in the Upgraded Community Design Model will identify proximity between residential areas and the parks, libraries, schools, shopping and work areas that support walking and bicycling. The shift in travel modes associated with this modeling will be calculated by the SLOCOG traffic model and evaluated for increased pedestrian and other non-auto travel and increased air quality. Finally, the health of residents will be a potential measurement within schools and through public health surveys, in particular whether obesity, diabetes and other sedentary lifestyle illnesses are reduced through active living planning and infrastructure.

Promote Equity

The attached County strategic growth policies and strategies encourage developing neighborhoods with a variety of housing types for a wide range of incomes. The Subdivision and Building Standards project will create regulations for locating specific kinds and amounts of this variety of housing within subdivisions and planned developments. The Complete Communities Survey will identify the current degree of installation of alternative transportation infrastructure within communities, including San Miguel and Oceano, which are two economically disadvantaged communities. It will identify funding methods to finance social parity for the basic infrastructure needs of communities. The draft survey will be reviewed by Community Advisory Councils, with attention to stakeholder input to the councils, before finalization. The San Miguel Community Plan will involve the community in planning the kind of improvements it wants given this information. Indicators will relate the deficiencies that exist relative to other communities as well as to desired improvement levels.

Increases Housing Affordability

The project will create opportunities to create affordable housing within higher density areas for market as well as subsidized pricing. Mixing a full range of income-related housing types within neighborhoods and projects is one strategy for gaining development that achieves this goal. The projects will focus on developing existing multi-family zoning, and planning additional areas to accommodate the housing needs of all income ranges that are described in the award-winning County Housing Element and County Housing Affordability Standards. The metric may be the degree of development that can occur within housing price ranges that can be related to the income ranges of community populations.

Promote Infill and Compact Development

The projects are directly related to this objective by identifying the physical improvements needed to create and enhance compact neighborhoods, and by creating the guidance for developers to design and build the projects. The County strategic growth principles, policies and strategies already exist toward meeting the objective, so that these projects are an implementation of the objective. The EIR project for the San Miguel Community Plan Update will provide the measurement of a small-town community plan done completely in the “smart growth” mode. The plan will be supported by the associated grant projects to inform infrastructure improvements and financing, neighborhood and community design. The Community Design Model will assist the community plan by identifying relative differences in density and neighborhood livability, using measurement factors, in support of the EIR and the community plan.

Revitalize Urban and Community Centers

The Complete Communities Survey will identify the infrastructure needs of four communities and their capacity to fund improvements. Its financing plan will identify monetary incentives for applicants to propose mixed-use and higher density projects. This grant application will result in development investment within downtowns and neighborhood centers as mixed-use core centers. The Survey will be very useful to address other communities’ needs and move forward with local capital improvement programs in the County budget.

Protect Natural Resources and Agricultural Land

The EIR projects will be directed toward this objective, which is the first principle of the County strategic growth principles and policies. The EIRs will utilize a GIS digital Constraints Analysis Model and review potential urban expansion areas to be identified in the Land Use and Circulation Element update (LUCE), and in the San Miguel Community Plan update. This model was completed this year and gives higher constraint values to natural resources and agricultural land. Suitability analysis will be used to consider compact neighborhood development where needed to accommodate projected population growth beyond the capacity (buildout) of community plans, before and after 2035. The EIRs will review these proposals.

Reduce Automobile Use and Fuel Consumption

Adopted strategic growth policies and strategies will result in reduced use of automobiles for daily trips. The proposed projects will enable implementation of these policies. They will determine the degree that infill and expansion areas can be fully developed and use model scenarios with enhanced development standards and higher densities to determine potential reductions in vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gases. The focus on compact neighborhoods with diverse housing types will enable measurements of vehicle miles traveled (and fuel consumption) from the proximity of these areas to daily destinations (based on the SLOCOG PSCS Target Development Areas). The Survey will enable evaluations of pedestrian improvements that can be realistically funded under business as usual and in the SLOCOG draft Regional Transportation Plan.

Improve Infrastructure Systems

The Complete Communities Survey will meet this objective by compiling an inventory of infrastructure and other facilities that are considered essential to serving walkable, compact development in complete communities. The survey will include a financing analysis and plan to inform an inter-departmental team and guide decisions to improve the County Capital Improvement Program, so that it emanates from the strategic growth policies into priorities in funding and department budgets. A measurement would be adoption of the Survey as a guide for preparing the County budget.

Promote Water Conservation

The project will identify residential water consumption from the various scenarios to test the Subdivision and Development Standards, within infill and community expansion areas, to determine the degree of conservation that proposals create.

Promote Energy Efficiency and Conservation

The project does not directly involve energy efficiency measures separate from other concurrent efforts; it will rely on the County Climate Action Plan for measurements of relative energy efficiencies within compact development. It will provide the measurement tools in the Community Design Model, which currently measures energy use of development.

Strengthen the Economy

The project is focused on residential and mixed use development within existing infill areas and potential urban expansion areas, which will be encouraged by financial incentives subsidizing facilities and development costs. Increased housing development close to daily destinations and work, and the infrastructure improvements to enable it, will create economic development. A measurement will evaluate the relative changes in jobs/housing ratios and the benefits to local businesses developing within these areas.

Step 3: Priority Considerations

1. Proposal demonstrates ongoing collaboration with state, regional and local, public and private stakeholders and community involvement (*include in work plan*).

County Planning and Building Department staff will maintain ongoing contact with other departments such as Administration, Public Works and Parks and Recreation and hold meetings at key stages of project development. Input and review comments will be sought from San Luis Obispo Council of Government, Caltrans and Regional Transit Authority staff, and coordination of model and scenario development and data will be ongoing. Staff and public stakeholders will be invited to workshop forums (also open to general public) for draft presentations and demonstrations of models. An existing large database of individuals in stakeholder organizations will be utilized to involve interest groups within business, development, environmental, social equity and agriculture interests. For instance, such related groups as the Healthy Eating–Active Living-SLO coalition of public health advocates will be involved. County and Community Service District staff will provide input on infrastructure needs and facility planning. All projects will have at least two feedback loops available to review draft documents and comment before decisions are finalized. Media information releases and County website postings will be made periodically to announce new documents and demonstrations of models.

2. Proposal demonstrates strategies or outcomes that can serve as best practices (BPS) for communities across the state.

The proposed projects implement essential-rated strategies within the attached strategic growth principles, policies and strategies. The County determined that Identifying the range of infrastructure needs and feasible funding methods, and removing obstacles to diverse infill development, were the two most important implementation strategies for more affordable housing and reduction in vehicle miles traveled. The Infrastructure Survey,

Development Standards and Community Design Model will provide inter-related platforms for similar development in other jurisdictions. The department will engage professional planners in general with announcements and online demonstrations through the American Planners Association, the Smart Growth Network and Congress for New Urbanism. The Institute for Local Government, Local Government Commission and the Strategic Growth Council and other governmental organizations representing cities and counties will also be contacted to provide information and web links.

3. Proposal is leveraged with additional resources, in-kind or funds.

The proposal identifies significant staff assignment to the projects and tasks – over 25 percent of the grant amount. For EIR preparation, the County is contributing \$150,000 already budgeted for the Land Use and Circulation Element EIR. The County will budget additional funds to the San Miguel Community Plan EIR to supplement and if possible reduce any approved grant amount for that project.

4. Proposal Addresses Climate Change Impacts.

The projects create data and methodologies to generate increased production of higher density housing in alignment with strategic growth principles and AB 32. They will enable the County to accelerate this production and provide supportive infrastructure to reduce trip lengths and divert trips from driving to other non-auto modes. The proposal will result in less greenhouse gas emissions than the business-as-usual trends that were identified in the 2006 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Baseline Inventory. A reduction in vehicle miles traveled will result by 2020 and increasingly to 2035 and 2050, because 67 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the county are estimated to be due to transportation sources. The proposal will create priority capital improvement programs for funding and building the facilities and infrastructure supportive of walkable, transit-oriented neighborhoods. These programs will improve the livability of communities and infill areas and their ability to adapt to other transportation modes than driving.

5. Proposal serves an economically disadvantaged community.

The request for funding an environmental impact report for the San Miguel Community Plan update will ensure that climate change effects are fully documented for this disadvantaged community. With this funding, the community plan project will not be delayed or even postponed due to lack of County budget funds. The plan update is well timed to carry momentum forward from the adoption of County strategic growth policies in April, 2009, which the Community Advisory Council actively supported. The council requested that the community be the first pilot project for a community plan update, to enable more affordable and complete community development. The community will be engaged through the entire update process.

Step 4: Organizational Capacity

Answer the following questions:

1. What is your organization's experience in completing this type of Proposal or similar Proposals? Is the expertise needed for the successful development of the Proposal available within the organization? If not, how do you plan to acquire it?

The County has contracted with consultants numerous times for community design plans, environmental impact reports, major ordinance amendments, financial studies for affordable housing, economic development and redevelopment feasibility. Staff will be able to manage the proposed consultant tasks and coordinate consultant needs with other staff and agencies.

2. Do you have active partners that will help develop the Proposal? How?

The proposals explain that County staff will work with other departments, SLOCOG staff and service districts in detail, by coordinating meetings and data input to the projects.

3. How will the Proposal be kept on schedule and within budget?

The County will utilize program management software suitable to the consultants, and coordinate grant administration with other workload assignments. The Project Manager and the Accounting Division will monitor deliverables and costs as well, to inform staff of cost status.

4. If the Proposal goes over budget, explain your contingency plan to cover the cost.

In the event that costs cannot cover the project tasks, staff will give priority to reducing the remaining costs by adjusting the scope, with the Grantor's review, and second by seeking a mid-year appropriation from the Board of Supervisors to supplement the budget and continue with the project tasks.

5. Identify in the work plan how the proposal will be implemented, including zoning updates if applicable.

The work plan identifies major ordinance infill development amendments that will be supported by other grant projects, such as the infrastructure survey and the community design model.